

To the Oregon House Committee on Health Care  
RE: HB 3016

I am writing in support of HB 3016 in a call for safe hospital nurse staffing. Our nurses have stood between us and the pandemic for a year, keeping us safe and caring for us when exposure occurred. They need your support to make sure that reasonable protections are in place to keep them on the job.

Our current COVID pandemic experience has illuminated an unforeseen flaw in this blanket suspension of the nurse staffing committee and its related staffing plans. Although it was painfully clear that our nursing workforce needed to adopt less than optimal standards in order to assess, stabilize, and address the needs of our patients, colleagues, and employers, this short-term strategy, while necessary, revealed a lack of preparedness and left nurses, throughout the state, without an ability to inform necessary contingency plans when nursing expertise was most desperately needed. It is essential that Oregon center the needs of patients by maintaining the collaborative, solution-based framework of our hospital nurse staffing committees to address evolving conditions and maintain a cohesive work environment. It's a proactive approach to emergency preparedness that limits uncertainty and will better prepare our health care system for future catastrophic events.